(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom conducted a hearing on 10 June, 2002 on the subject of "Recent Communal Violence in Gujarat, India and response". The Commission is a non-official body mandated by the U.S. Congress. The international community is well aware that Government rejects any intrusive inquiry into the internal affairs of India. India's long tradition of secularism and its constitutional, legal and institutional safeguards for the rights and welfare of all citizens are well known.

Softness towards Pakistan despite Musharraf's support to Kashmir

†205. SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the news-item captioned, "Musharraf ne Kashmeerion ko Samarathan jari rakhne ka bharosa dilaya", published in the Dainik Jagran on 8th June, 2002;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto and the reasons for showing softness towards Pakistan inspite of the said fact; and

(c) whether this softness will not affect the international scenario created against Pakistan ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) It was reported in the press that Pakistani President met Hurriyat leaders from PoK and assured Pakistan's diplomatic and moral support for the "cause of Kashmir".

(b) and (c) Such statements are a part of Pakistan's futile efforts to justify its sponsorship of cross border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and in other

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

parts of India. Government have apprised the international community of Pakistan's involvement with terrorism directed against India.

The State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. Government are firm in their resolve to take all necessary measures to defeat Pakistan's sponsorship of cross border terrorism and preserve the security and territorial integrity of the country. There is widespread international consensus that terrorism cannot be justified on any ground, it must be eradicated wherever it exists and Pakistan must, on a permanent basis, end cross border infiltration and terrorism directed against India.

U.S. Role in Indo-Pak Conflict

206. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the U.S.A. is acting as the arbiter in the Indo-Pak conflict;

(b) whether the current U.S. pressure urging restraint through the barrage of visits by U.S. officials, would put pressure on Government influencing its decision; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Pakistan's fulfilment of its commitment to premanently end cross-border terrorism against India is an essential pre-requisite for the normalisation of the situation.